



SOUTHERN PARK COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Minutes for January 16, 2014 Special Board Meeting

1) Visitors:

Bill Betz	Stephen Klingler	Mary Reppard
Mary Curtis	Jessica Mason	Sunny Sacks
Marshall Dunn Sr.	Mary Ann Melvin	Jim Smith
Norma Farmer	Ron Melvin	Dan Sullivan
Karen Frerichs	Jim Moehle	Sonia Sullivan
Harry Clay Gintzer III	Laura Owens	David Wade
Linda Griffith	Randy Owens	
Donavon Johnson	Mike Parrish	

2) Attendees:

Board members present:

Amy Mason
Anita Long
Flip Boettcher
Jim Ivey
Roberta Smith (Secretary to the Board)

Excused Board Member:

Gene Stanley

Department members present

Acting Chief Aaron Mandel
Don Rocksted
Steven Rizzio.
Auxiliary member present is Mike Brandt.

3) **Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 8:11 AM by Chairwoman Amy Mason.

4) Re-Appoint and Administer the Oath of Office for Jim Ivey:

Anita Long moved to reappoint Jim Ivey as SPCFPD Board member and Flip Boettcher seconded the motion. Vote is unanimous. Jim Ivey is reappointed and given the Oath of Office by Amy Mason. Steve Klingler, Notary, notarized the appointment. Jim Ivey welcomed to the Board. Mike Parrish notes that in the SDA Manual Chapter 1 CRS 32-1-103(5) Director Qualification. The manual states that qualifications must be met at the time of self nomination form or letter and at the time appointed by the Board of Directors. Amy Mason explained that at the last Board Meeting on Jan. 9th when Jim Ivey was appointed the Board did not recognize that he was not a registered voter. Amy stated they contacted DOLA and DOLA instructed them on what to do. Mike Parrish states the community is confused by what is in the manual. Amy requests the relevant page number in the manual. Mike states it is in the Board Member Manual Revised 2013 Edition on page 1 under qualifications. Amy summarizes that Jim's qualifications are now current and he is now qualified, we've reappointed him now that he is a registered voter as recommended by DOLA (Department of Legal Affairs), and we have done the appointment and the Oath as recommended by DOLA. Mike Parrish states it doesn't state you can do it again. Just to keep things legal.

For clarification: On January 9th, 2014 unbeknownst to this Board Jim Ivey was not an eligible candidate at the time of his first board appointment as he was not a registered voter. His appointment ended

*immediately when the Board learned of this matter. Following DOLA's recommendations, Jim then provided this board with his current voter registration and proof that he is a qualified candidate as a Director of this Special District. This morning his reappointment was executed to the standards of CRS 32-1-103(5) and also under the Special Districts Manual Chapter 1 Board Membership, A Qualifications, Page 1. **

5) Approval of Agenda: Amy Mason states she would like to amend the Agenda and add Board Communication. Anita moves to approve the Agenda as amended and Flip Boettcher seconds the motion. Vote is unanimous. Motion passes.

6) Board Communication (added):

Amy announces that Roberta Smith resigned as Secretary to the Board on January 14th effective February 6, 2014. Amy thanks and gives appreciation to Roberta for the work she has done. Roberta will finish up the minutes through February 6, 2014. Amy shares a Thank You card and a wooden plaque engraved with Mason Inn in 2012 from some folks stranded after their car was totaled in 2012. Amy opened up her home to these stranded individuals the SPCFPD brought to her home for refuge as there are no motels or hotels in this area. The BOD has asked for other community members to come forward and volunteer to handle similar instances. There are other volunteers on a list to provide shelter in cases such as this.

5) Board Discussion Addressing Community Concerns:

Amy Mason would like to address the public concerns that were vocalized at the last meeting and wants to thank everybody for coming forward. It was a difficult and emotional meeting. Amy states she would like to assure the public that no member of the Board knew in December that Mike was going to be terminated and there was no great plan. On the contrary, Amy states she had made a commitment to work with the Board and to work with Mike Simpson to make this District succeed. Amy further states she met with Mike on the phone and talked with him daily. She came down to the Department several times.

Amy states she will be here at the Fire Department every day from 12:00 to 1:00PM for the next four months having mini potlucks if anyone wants to come down and meet with her. Amy reminds everyone that the minutes are public and the tapes from Dispatch are public. Amy would like to direct you to the minutes on January 2, 2014 regarding Harry Gintzer's comments. Harry states he thinks the action was premature and he did not say that they had no merit nor did he state that there were not any issues. The difference between Harry's opinion and the other three Board members appear to be about the action that was taken regarding the performance problems. Other Board members could expand on this.

The other thing that is of concern to the community is where we go from here. It is not about just one individual that was not performing well. It was about creating an efficient, effective and safe Department to provide numerous types of emergency services. Over the next four months Amy would like that to be the District's single focus. Today we are having a workshop with our medical mutual aid agencies. We are going to have special Board meetings every other month to continue work and communication.

Amy states she has received 300 emails, some of which were positive and some emails were negative.

After the last meeting Amy and her daughter were escorted home by a Deputy Sheriff as threats were overheard and reported to the Sheriff's Department. She found this personally distressing that people here in our community were so upset that they made viable threats against her and her family that were heard in the back of the room and in the parking lot to warrant a mandatory Sheriff escort home for their safety. The escort home was not an option and it was very distressing to Amy and her family. She felt this was unacceptable and understood how emotional this situation is for our community and thanked everyone for their support, input and sees that we are going forward in a positive direction. Mike Parrish asked if anyone had been contacted and arrested? A comment was made by Donavon Johnson that this was unwarranted as he was in the back of the room and he did not hear any threatening remarks. He felt it was done by someone inside the Department to "stir the pot." Amy responded that a report was made directly by a call to the

Sheriff's Department by a concerned person attending our last meeting and she was told an officer would escort her home.

Anita Long reported that after review of the record, there were repeated discussions regarding Chief Simpson's performance that were in the public record. She states *"Many have expressed the opinion that 'no one knew' that the board was having performance issues with Chief Simpson. Six separate issues were discussed in detail at the public meeting held on August 13, 2013. The minutes of the August 13th meeting are published on our website."*

"I've given each board member a copy of those minutes, a copy of the Chief's job description and a copy of the letter from South Park Ambulance District."

The first "area of improvement" that was discussed at the open meeting was the need for the Chief to obtain his Colorado EMS Provider Certificate. During his public interview at the public meeting held back on May 11, 2013 when he was interviewed which was open to the public. He was interviewed by the board, interviewed by any department members that wished to ask him questions and we asked if anybody from the public wanted to ask him any questions. Mike was informed that, even though he had his National EMT certification, he would also need Colorado Certification. He stated that that would not be a problem. Shortly after he started work, he was provided with the information he needed to start the application process. Ten weeks later, what should have been a six-week process at max, had not been completed. When the board at that time attempted to set a target date, simply for completing the steps needed to APPLY for the certification, Mike informed us that his CPR certification had expired and he would have to renew it before he could even begin the application process. He had not voluntarily communicated this important change in his status to the board until that day. When asked how or why he had allowed it to expire, he said, essentially, his employer had dropped the ball. The board pointed out that Colorado EMT-B was a KNOWN requirement of the position and should be considered one of his highest priorities. (He subsequently renewed his CPR certification a month later, but despite the board's admonishments, he continued to find excuses as to why he couldn't get his EMT-B certification done)."

"Another item discussed at Mike's interview was that the Guffey Chief position would require considerable ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with surrounding agencies, county officials and other entities also in the job description. Again from the August 13th meeting, Item 3) "Improved communication with the board", and Item 6) "The Chief is the contact person for the board and that responsibility should not be delegated." actually evolved from the same general concern: The method by which the Chief notified Fairplay that Guffey would no longer respond to medical calls during weekdays. On July 25th, Chairman Sam Calanni discovered that 2 days earlier July 23rd that Mike had notified Fairplay of that fact. He had not first informed the Board, he had not first notified any of our mutual aid agencies, and to the best of my knowledge he had not had any kind of emergency meeting or other discussion with our volunteer EMT's to discuss the situation, or any alternatives or any plans for resolving our response issues. When he did subsequently inform our mutual aid agencies, he did so by delegating that task to someone else; meaning the heads of those agencies were speaking to someone they didn't know, someone they had never met and never heard of. That communication was the responsibility of the Chief: both by his job description and common courtesy and by common courtesy and protocol."

"If you check the minutes, in the months that followed, you'll find several references to mutual aid and medical response issues. From that meeting with the 3 agencies on September 1st, to a communication from Maria Mitchel (in the November 21st minutes), to the December 5th meeting when it was reported that we had received a letter (dated December 2nd) from South Park Ambulance District regarding termination of our mutual aid agreement. This is not an insignificant event. These agencies are critical to our ability as a small, rural, district to provide adequate emergency services to the members of our community. Chief Simpson, Amy Mason and I accepted SPAD's generous invitation to attend their December 10th board meeting. Many issues were discussed at that meeting most significantly what we planned to do to resolve our response issues. I cannot tell you that I can quote verbatim what Chief Simpson said at one point during

the discussion but I CAN tell you that it definitely began with the 2 words, "THOSE responders" followed by something like "just need to get their acts together and step up to the plate". I do not feel it is appropriate for a Fire Chief to denigrate and blame his volunteers in any public forum."

"One last point... at our December 5th board meeting, a little over a month ago, Mike had a "public meltdown". In the never ending discussion about getting his Colorado EMT-B certification, a primary objective, he jumped from his seat, started yelling at the board and proceeded to ask the board (and again I may not have the words exactly right, but the words are close and the meaning was clear), he asked/yelled, "How the f'ing hell did I have the time to work on getting my certification when I was spending all my time looking for a place to live?" I was not happy about the outburst or the "f" bomb but I was more concerned by the fact that he was basically telling us that he couldn't do his job because he had to find a house. I've never worked for anyone who would tolerate that as an excuse and it told me about Mike's priorities and just how seriously he was taking our suggestions on how to improve his performance."

"These three issues alone should cause concern for every member of our community. And as we have stated several times, there were many other issues that continued to build up over time. Many, while troubling on their own, would not have been overly significant. However, these three that I've just discussed in detail are significant and they added to the board's concerns about Mike's job performance."

"There comes a time when all the little problems added to the more significant problems, combined with the final critical problems at the very end of December to finally tip the scale. That scale finally tipped on January 2, 2014." She states she has never had to terminate an employee in public before which is not pleasant for anyone including the employee and his family. She continues to think that this Board made the right decision. Flip Boettcher states that this essentially sums up the whole affair.

Mary Curtis asks if Chief Simpson was on a probationary period. Amy Mason states the probationary period is for one year. Was Chief Simpson ever told not to look for a house because there is a good chance you might not pass your probationary period? Anita states that Sam Calanni suggested that he might want to find a place to rent as opposed to looking for a house. Mary asks since it was Mike's priority to find a house why wouldn't somebody say don't find a house since you're on probation and as far as we are concerned you are not doing your job and there is a good chance that you may not pass your probationary period? Mary states the reason she is bringing this up because she did not hear one bad thing about Mike Simpson. Mary states she was on vacation when she heard Mike was fired and she was in shock because she had only heard good things. The fact that he uprooted his family, his wife sold her business and he found a house and it just seems like issues were not communicated. Mary again questions why in the world he would uproot if he had any inkling of an idea that there is a chance that he wouldn't pass his probationary period? Amy Mason responds that she commends this Board and this Department that if they were having personnel issues they were not going to say anything to the public. She states they spoke specifically of these issues in every single one of these Public Meetings when we had these executive sessions and discussions with him. There was significant discussion. Amy also states they went out to other Departments and we went out to SPAD because they were terminating our mutual aid and our Board was called to them because of this problem. In that respect Amy is glad that it wasn't getting around that there were troubles and concerns. Mike was given every chance to do this and we were working with him on it. Anita states she attended the first training session after Mike was terminated and the volunteers were asking why didn't you tell us and why didn't we know? When you are trying to work with an employee who has performance issues you don't go to the people who are working for them and air those issues. This is a private personnel issue and Colorado has statutes regarding the Employer/Employee relationship and keeping things confidential. The Board cannot go out into the community and discuss the employee problems they are having. The Board can discuss them in a public meeting and if you attended the public meetings you would have heard the full discussion. The minutes are a synopsis of that meeting.

Mike Parrish stated the community was going to do their own research. In all those special meeting minutes there is nothing in the minutes regarding these issues. In most of those meetings on Thursday mornings routine Board business was conducted.

Donavon Johnson asked why mutual aid was terminated Monday through Friday but you would have medical coverage on Saturday. How many EMT's do you have on this Fire Department still? Was it possibly because there are no EMT's here during the week? Donavon stated he had a very long meeting with Four Mile on Tuesday. They saw things being built under Mike Simpson. Amy stated that a lot of those people weren't here to see what was happening. Donavon stated Mike worked with Four Mile and Mike went to the Teller County Chief's meetings. Teller County has a lot of respect for him. Amy offered to discuss it further with Donavon after the meeting and he stated, "I don't have time for that."

Jim Smith asked Amy Mason if Mike Simpson was notified in writing in advance that he would be terminated if he did not rectify these issues you are talking about. Amy Mason states that he was not notified in writing but it is a given when you are on probationary status if you don't perform the duties of the job you are not going to stay employed.

Amy states she had a hearing with Mike Simpson that morning of January 2nd.

Mike Parrish states that hearing was not a hearing. Mike P. states Amy Mason called Mike S. earlier in the day. Mike P. states he was standing beside Mike Simpson and the one on one was going to include Anita and he asked if he could bring a witness and he was told he could not. He also asked if he could record this. Mike Parrish state never was this a formal hearing. That is not true. Amy states that we have a copy of the recording and the attorney has a copy of the recording.

Jim Smith states let the record show that you did not notify him in advance that he was going to be terminated. Amy Mason states let the record show per Colorado State law that is not a requirement of the law. If you are not doing your job in Colorado you can be terminated at any point.

Amy Mason states, *"To address the concerns expressed by our community, would any members of this board like to make a motion at this time to reinstate Mike Simpson as Fire Chief of the Southern Park County Fire Protection District? (Silence) Let the record reflect that there is not a motion and this topic is now closed."*

Sunnie Sacks read a letter from Pam Moore dated January 14, 2014 to the Board of Directors regarding the recent firing of Chief Mike Simpson. Pam essentially states she has been a Guffey property owner for over 20 years and a school administrator for 13 years and that she expresses her sincere disapproval of Chief Simpson's termination after only seven months on the job. She further lauds Mr. Simpson's work with the community and his support and extreme responsiveness to the school's needs. She stated they were in the process of building a positive relationship with the chief and the school families too. She further states that this action occurred after the resignation of long-time board President Sam Calanni followed by the appointment of a new chairperson. This action taken by the four remaining board members one of whom voted against it and later resigned in protest of the action. She feels this hasty decision has led to the resignation of 9 to 12 volunteer fire personnel, leaving our fire department and community at risk. All this occurred prior to an impending board election in May which would have allowed the community a say in this matter. She further requests that this Board would reconsider and reinstate Mike Simpson as Fire Chief until after the May election.

Anita Long responds that she thought Chief Simpson's community outreach within the Guffey community was fine but that doesn't over ride the issues the Board had especially after the weekend of December 28th and 29th. Things happened that the Board felt were critical enough to make this decision. Anita Long states she fulfilled her duty to do what she thought was best for the safety and the protection of this Department.

Jim Smith asks about Mike Simpson's Certification. Did the Board know about those faults before you hired him? Anita Long states that they checked his NR EMT and it was valid. According to Colorado State

Regulations if you have a Nationally Registered EMT Certification what you need to do is get fingerprinted, provide evidence that you are current on CEUs, fill out the application and send it out. Anita states she believes there is a provision for a temporary certification while they do background checks. Given that you cannot verify Louisiana Certification on line the Board accepted Mike's resume that he had certification in Louisiana and the National. She states they verified what they could. At start of employment Mike was given the information that he needed to register to get his Colorado EMTB Certification. Mike Parrish states he was given until March 2014 to accomplish getting his Colorado EMTB Certification. Amy Mason states Mike was terminated for other issues than the Colorado EMTB Certification.

6) Election Update by Mary Ann Melvin:

Mary Ann states she wrote a letter To Whom It May Concern to explain to the Board and the public why the action of reappointing Jim Ivey was necessary. The Board should have noted this before they made the appointment. She states she found it out because we had a candidate who came to the meeting already self nominated. It is her responsibility as a DEO to make sure the people are qualified. There is a list of what to do to nominate yourself which is posted on the District's web site and the first is to be a registered Colorado voter. Mary Ann states she has a form from Secretary of State to check if this person is a Registered Colorado voter.

Mary Ann received a list of nine people who were interested in being on the Board so Mary Ann started her research and found that Jim Ivey was not a registered voter. She notified the Board and the Board cured the issue and Jim is now a registered voter.

DOLA has been really tough and HB 13-1303 is confusing. Mary Ann asked DOLA what we should do in a certain situation and DOLA gave some advice and when Mary Ann continues to ask questions DOLA then states there is a cleanup bill coming. Mary Ann continues to monitor the legislative process but she has not seen anything that refers to the House Bill that states elections will be mail-in elections. DOLA and the SDA manual states that mail-in elections don't apply to special districts.

Donna Rodriguez has been in touch with the Sec of State's Office. Donna reports she contacted State Representative Jim Wilson who got her in touch with Dwight Shellman who is a County Regulation and Support Manager and an Attorney. The first thing he advises is to have your Attorney protect your DEO. There are groups in the State of Colorado who are looking for examples to sue to prove that HB1303 is a bad bill. We have to be prepared to do everything right or this Fire Department might have another suit against it. HB1303 requires that all ballots be mail-in ballots. DOLA and the Sec of State states that this does not apply to non-partisan entities but it is still very unclear. In HB1303 if you are to have an all mail-in ballot how many days in advance does the plan have to be submitted if the County Clerk performs the election? If the DEO performs the election how many days in advance does the plan need to be submitted?

The Sec. of State has confirmed any plan submitted by a DEO will be rejected. There will be no acceptance other than by County Clerks. The Park County Clerk's office has already stated they will not do it. That leaves us with doing a polling location. Donna has asked how to handle property owners who don't live here or if you are out of town. Possibly a mail-in ballot can be mailed to people who are out of town. Property owners who do not live here and are not registered voters here are not eligible to vote in a Board election. They can vote for Ballot Issues but they cannot vote in a Board election. You have to live here and be registered here to vote in the upcoming Board of Directors election. Dwight Shellman said do not do anything without your attorney's approval. The County Clerk and the Assessor's office will provide the information on the SPCFPD's borders. We may have to pay for it. February 5th is the call for nomination. Mary Ann has asked the Park County Clerk and the Deputy Clerk and they state they have nothing to do with Special Districts. However, HB 1303 has changed everything. DOLA states to attend the DEO 101 course for answers to your question. The first course doesn't start until January 21st and doesn't end until the end of March. Mary Ann strongly recommends to the Board that the Board use a Polling Location.

Donna Rodriguez states that the law requires a secure location for same day registration be provided. These are called Service Centers with a secure internet connection and it has to be manned by someone using computer access to the secure internet connection to register these people on line. Service Centers require a drop box secured in the ground with concrete and a secure internet camera monitoring 24 hours per day.

Amy Mason thanks Mary Ann for the election update. Anita and Mary Ann posted the self-nomination form from DOLA on the District web site. When questions arose they called the Attorney's office and spoke to their election specialist and she stated the form is not good because DOLA came up with a revised form B9 Self Nomination and Acceptance Form Revised 12/18/2013 but not yet final. Anita asked when will it be final and the election specialist talked about the cleanup bill. All the attorneys and the Special District Association have been pressing the legislators to get in gear and get this resolved because it is causing problems for every special district. Anita and Mary Ann took the form down and posted information on the web site with the link to DOLA so that anyone who clicked on the form would know why we took the form down. We changed the wording to "You may go to the DOLA website listed above and download the not yet final version of Form B9. If you choose this option or if you had already downloaded a copy of the prior form from our website you might want to check back again in early February to determine if any critical changes have been made by DOLA. Anita also included the information that covers eligibility to run for a BOD position. The information on the website is as current as we can be at this time. Donna states this affects the School Board elections and your HOA. The self nomination forms must be in by 3:00PM on February 28th.

7) Treasurer Update-Anita Long:

Anita states we received a letter of engagement from our CPA firm. They review our year's books. In addition they complete the application for Exemption from Audit to the State of Colorado. We do not have to go through a full-blown CPA audit which would cost us thousands of dollars. The fee that the CPA firm charged us last year was \$2025. Anita moves that the District engage Osborne, Parsons and Rosacker LLP to perform these functions for prior year 2013 at an estimated fee of \$2050. If that cost changes we will come to the Board for approval for any additional amounts. Jim Ivey seconds the motion. Vote is unanimous. The motion passes. Anita states we always do an Internal Audit and that the Audit committee is composed of Mary Ann Melvin, Donna Rodriguez, Gene Stanley and Anita Long. Flip motions to approve the Internal Audit committee and Jim Ivey seconds the motion. Vote is unanimous. Motion passes. The Internal Audit committee will meet this Saturday, January 18 @ 10AM.

8) Acting Chief Update-Aaron Mandel (See Chief's Report): Aaron opens by stating his appreciation of public attendance and participation. The calls to date from January 1 to January 16, 2014 are as follows:

Incident Responses:	Month	Year-to-Date
Traffic Accidents	2	2
Medical	0	0
Wild Fires	0	0
Smoke Reports	0	0
Structure Fire	0	0
Other	0	0
Total Calls	2	2

Aaron reports that on January 9th the T-shirt bundles for volunteer appreciation were ordered. On Jan 10th there was a Traffic Accident on CR 403. Both SPCFPD and Lake George responded. Lake George stood us down because there was no one at the car. The driver works at the mine and had already gone into work.

On Jan. 11th Aaron met with Dave Baysinger who is one of our communications volunteer. The goal is to remove the repeater from Gordon Scott's property and move it to Jan Breslins's property. This would improve our communication across the county so we can stop using the county channels as much and start

using our own channels. The wildland annual refresher and pack test was held on January 11th. The pack test is three miles, forty five pound pack, in 45 minutes. Three people passed and our Chairwoman Amy Mason gave it a shot and only missed it by a few minutes.

On January 12th Aaron met with the Bull Moose and placed an order for the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. There was a cleaning party at the station. Aaron thanks all who helped especially Amy Mason. Also, brought on Ric Turley as a volunteer member who has years of experience in politics and public relations. Ric will be helping with PR and help improve our image in the community.

On January 13th the Staffing Committee met. Anita has some minutes from the brief meeting.

The first option is to hire another Chief at what we were paying the previous chief. The second option is what the mutual aid agencies prefer would be a pay per call system which requires the chief be paid much less but we would have more people on staff. This ensures 24 hours per day 7 days per week we would have 1 EMT and 1 Fire Fighter always on duty. The down side is it might be difficult to find another chief. What Aaron has to work with is \$70K. How to pay a chief, an administrative assistant, possibly one other person and then pay per call for volunteers out of the amount of \$70K. The bottom line is we are going to figure out what positions need to be filled and figure out what we can afford to pay them. We have one draft of one of the positions. As our committee continues to meet we will keep the public updated on what we are doing. It is \$120 each for a 48 hour shift on call for 1 EMT and 1 fire fighter to carry a radio and \$25/hour when responds to a call. For five days a week the Chief is the fire fighter. Aaron figures it will cost approx \$20K for the pay per call system. Aaron states a new chief would have to come to work for \$25K or \$30K annually.

Scott Elmore took the Chief's truck down to Canon City to have 4 new tires put on. Aaron met with Anita to learn how to pay the bills for the Fire Department. Aaron received a quote from volunteer Scott Zorno for a snow plow. Aaron would like to compare what it would cost for Chris Downare to plow versus what a plow would cost? His other concern is that the plow would have to be placed on the Chief's truck which is getting on in years. The added strain of plowing with the truck might not be a good idea. In our Capital Improvement Budget we have an item to look at replacing the Chief's truck in a year or so. It might be that we wait a year to purchase a plow to put on the Chief's truck when it is the volunteers' truck. We would keep that truck for volunteers to use or whoever is covering the shift for that day so they have a vehicle to get around and they do not have to beat up their personal vehicles.

On January 14th Karen Frerichs cleaned the floors at Station #1. Aaron thanked Karen. Chris Downare delivered a load of gravel which has been spread outside to help keep the mud from being tracked in on the Station floor. We had our normal weekly training. We discussed Fire Department communications and primarily getting the volunteers up to snuff on what Aaron expects for communications. We have some newer volunteers who are having issues learning how to operate their radios. We spent time going through radio operation and how the repeater system works.

On January 15th Aaron went to Colorado Springs to attend the Colorado Prescribe Fire Council meeting. Last week Aaron was asked if he would be the Board Chair for the State Prescribe Fire Council as the current Chair is resigning. Aaron had to decline. Our agency has joined the Colorado Prescribe Fire Council. After the lower North Fork tragedy they have rearranged the entire fire service in Colorado. It used to be that the Colorado State Forrest Service ran Fire Management. Now it is run by the Department of Public Health and Safety Fire Prevention and Control. State legislation has been passed that requires us to meet certain requirements to do prescribe burning. We are going to have to adopt the Colorado State standards. It involves having a burn boss to write burn plans for every time we burn a slash pile. We have to look into endangered species, water shed and smoke management, etc. In the State of Colorado we currently have 11 Type III Prescribe Fire Boss and Aaron is one of them. Every time Aaron writes a plan it has to be reviewed. Our goal is to put together a Prescribe Fire Program whereby the Home Owners Associations in conjunction with our Department can bring their slash to one of our substations and we can burn it for them. In the past we were able to do this but we had to stop due to regulations and liability. There are issues which

need to be addressed but we are in the process. We had a CPR class given by Jody Weaver. All of our volunteers did very well. Aaron thinks everyone got 100 on the test. The class was not open to the public because the cost is \$45/person and there were limited slots due to the number of mannequins. If there is community interest Aaron would be glad to put on CPR classes in house.

Aaron requests that the Board review his Ambulance Proposal, the Plow Estimate, and the rough Draft of the District Liaison position that he has included with the Chief's Report.

Aaron is requesting that the Board approve a new cost of \$1,024. which is an additional \$224 for eight additional T-shirt bundles? Amy Mason motions to approve the additional \$224. to purchase the eight additional T-shirt bundles and Anita Long seconds the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

Aaron discusses his Ambulance proposal. Aaron proposes his recommendation on how to restructure his ambulance services to provide the best care possible. There are two main areas of concern and one is the staffing issue, which we are already addressing with the staffing committee. The second is the age and condition of our equipment. Med 91 is the Ambulance at Station #1. Med 92 is at our substation. When we bought Med 91 over ten years ago we paid about \$8000. This ambulance has run on 142 calls in the past three years. It has cost us \$8,107.41 in repairs. Currently the ambulance is out of service due to the four-wheel drive being out, the patient heat is out, the fast idle not working and the motor seems like it might be going out. We are still running Med 92 and it is in full service.

Aaron recommends that we remove Med 91 from service for good and we look at selling it. Aaron recommends that we look into selling Med 92 and one of our two sets of ALS equipment to help create funds to purchase a new used ambulance. A 2002 to 2005 Type III Ambulance with four-wheel drive will cost approx. \$15K to \$18K. If we can get half of this money by selling some of this old equipment than Aaron thinks this is what we should do. We would have 1 newer more reliable ambulance that won't need all the maintenance our current ambulance requires. This ambulance would be BLS but we would hold on to one of those sets of ALS equipment just in case we could go back to running ALS.

The other option is to sell Med 91 and keep running Med 92. The only drawback is Med 92 is a smaller ambulance with less room to work in it. Since we are currently not transporting patients all the way to the hospital but doing patient transfers this isn't too big of an issue. Down the road if we start transporting all the way to the hospital, which is what we would like to do, this may become an issue. Please take these recommendations under advisement and let me know if you need any further information. If we were to sell these two ambulances we would just have one ambulance. Aaron has looked at the call run volume. When Med 91 was in service the other ambulance (Med 92) seldom ran. Aaron thinks the total calls on Med 2 were 32 compared to Med 1's calls of 142. Aaron doesn't know if it makes sense to keep two ambulances. That is a Board decision.

Roberta Smith asks Amy Mason if we would be addressing the mistake made on the January 2, 2014 Public Board Meeting Minutes. Amy states we will do that at the next meeting when we approve the minutes.

9) Break 10:00AM to 10:17AM: Amy Mason states she would like to take a 15-minute break.

10) 10:17AM – EMS Services Workshop (MOU/Mutual Aid) with guests:

Paul Mattson, Chief SPAD, South Park Ambulance District, Fairplay

Candy Shoemaker, Director, North West Teller County- EMS, Cripple Creek

Tim Dienst, CEO, UPRAD, Ute Pass Ambulance District, Woodland Park

Visitors: Karen Frerichs, Mary Curtis, Shelly Ridderman, Jim Smith, Norma Farmer,

Attendees: Board members present are Amy Mason, Anita Long, Flip Boettcher, Jim Ivey and Secretary to the Board, Roberta Smith. Gene Stanley has an excused absence. Department members present are Acting Chief Aaron Mandel and Don Rocksted. Auxiliary present is Mike Brandt.

Amy Mason: We went to the SPAD Board Meeting in Fairplay on December 10, 2013; our mutual aid was discontinued on December 31, 2013. We are here today to look at different options to move forward and figure out what we need to do. In review, Amy Mason states that most of the Board did not know why the three responders were at the August 2013 SPCFPD Board Meeting. Amy states she was very upset and shocked she was not informed that we (SPCFPD) were not handling EMS calls through the week. We (the board) did not know what was going on. We appreciate everyone being here and moving forward and the positive training and wonderful job Aaron is doing. She felt that the District was off to a good start.

Paul Mattson: Paul states he had the opportunity to meet with Aaron Mandel a couple of weeks ago. States he had excellent communication with Aaron. States he thought Aaron was open to considering strengths and weaknesses of the existing system. It is the longest conversation he has had with Interim Chief of SPCFPD since Gene Stanley was Chief. From subsequent conversations you guys have jumped on a lot of things we had a chance to talk about. Candy, Tim and I met last week and went over some of the things that have come out of the meeting with Aaron. It sounds like you are on a really good track to start moving forward and get this system back to where it used to be to handle the routine calls.

Candy Shoemaker: She commented all of us in EMS services have been where you are and that's the way with EMS particularly volunteer systems. Please don't feel like wherever you are at is in a strange place because everybody in EMS has been there before. We are certainly willing to help you with what you and your community feel is the best option for you. SWT (Southwest Teller) has never had a written mutual aid agreement with you, however, if you have called we have always met you or come over or done whatever we can do to help. Candy states she does not foresee that changing.

Tim Dienst: He added EMS is becoming more difficult to fund to operate and fund particularly in rural areas. In Kit Carson County they have similar issues with funding and finance and volunteer recruitment and retention. Things are going to get more dynamic in the future. There is a lot coming down with the Affordable Care Act that will impact all of us. We are here to try to figure something out and help you move forward.

Candy Shoemaker: Looking at some of the small volunteer systems. You don't have a lot of calls and EMS has never been a money maker. The problem that you face is the increase in cost. Maybe your income may be staying fairly flat but those costs are going up.

Tim Dienst: It is probably going to get worse.

Anita Long: Anita states we don't bill for our services because the people that pay taxes to the District are included. We occasionally bill if we go out on a run on someone who has never opted to be included or visitors to our area. You stated maybe our income is flat but we have actually taken a hit on property tax income this year somewhere in the vicinity of 8% to 9%. We are dealing with trying to do more with a lower budget. It is a challenge that we are working on. The staffing committee which is comprised of Donna West, Flip Boettcher, Aaron Mandel and I met on Monday. When we met we talked about what are our goals. What are the critical things that we have to cover? The most critical is responders. We need to be sure we have EMT's and fire personnel available if Aaron is off. Especially EMTs even if Aaron is on. If we get more than one call and we don't have the guarantee that we have another responder available and Aaron is out then that becomes an issue for us. Anita states we are not anywhere close because she still has a lot of legal issues to look at and budgetary issues to look at. What we hope to do is to have an on call system for whatever period of time for approx. \$2.50/ hour on call but they have to be within 10 miles. Adding to that if they go on a call there will be some remuneration at approx \$25/hour. If Aaron is off then it would be two people on call. If Aaron is on then we would only have to have one person on call. She states we have some good EMT's but we just have to work out some schedules so that people can be available. The second goal in terms of staffing is to address retention and recruitment. Then there is training for our existing personnel who might want to step up. It is a very preliminary overview but that is where we are going.

Amy Mason: Amy asks Anita how much money the wildland fire program bring into our District. The benefits of this program include income, equipment and additional training for our fire fighting volunteers in Guffey. Anita states she thinks in 2012 it was \$40K to \$50K and in 2013 it was just under \$20K. Anita states that property taxes and the wildland fire program constitute the majority of our income.

Paul Mattson: Paul states property taxes are a serious problem in Park County and elsewhere. In our system in 2012 compared to 2011 we were down 24% cumulative on our taxes. In 2013 our call volume went up 26%. A normal January would be around 60 calls and we were at 76 calls yesterday and we are only in the middle of the month. We are at 10% of our annual call volume in the first two weeks of this year 2014. As Tim mentioned reimbursement is a huge issue. Medicare or Medicaid costs do not come anywhere close to covering actual expenses on a transport. Nationally, there is not adequate funding for EMS. A system our size is writing off approx \$150K to \$160K.

Tim Dienst: Tim states we are writing off around \$780K a year plus bad debt it puts us over \$1,000, 000.

Candy Shoemaker: States with the bad debt it is over \$1,000,000.

Paul Mattson: All of us accept Medicare. It is a great program for people that have it. We collect 25% on Medicare. Medicaid collection is more in the range of \$10%. On a Medicaid patient to go to Denver and back we will spend about \$80 on fuel and we collect \$118. It is better than nothing but it is still inadequate. Those are huge problems. On the \$2.50/hour on call system we had a system like that a number of years ago in South Park. We only had one paid crew on but had enough people who were employees that lived in town and we did the same thing. At that time you could pay less than minimum wage to be available as long as you were reimbursing them in what they do. At that time the court upheld that 20 minutes was the threshold. We used the 10 mile range because that is going to be a little quicker than 20 minutes. We found that effective for us but after a period of time we found that between the on-call and part-time we realized we were spending what we could to put a full crew up. One of the things that is difficult for responders is the down time waiting for the next call which is wearing and tearing especially when you have a limited call volume. I think your call volume is approx 80 calls per year. He states when he started at South Park we were at about 100 calls per year and that is tough for volunteers to commit to where they do 10 days last month and 10 days this month They have never been on the ambulance because all the calls were on days when they weren't there. It is important that if you proceed with an on call system you are establishing that they are a paid employee and they are held to a different standard. As a Board of Directors you are holding your volunteers to the same standards as anyone else. You have to. It is a very positive way to establish a working relationship with people that we have an agreement here and this is what we expect and this is what you are getting in return. There is a pride to those people that they are a paid EMT for SPCFPD. They are valued.

Aaron Mandel: Aaron thanks everyone for coming. Aaron states he is in over his head. Amy comments she disagreed with his statement. He states his door is open to any and all suggestions. He doesn't know the answers. He states he knew he was on the right track when he talked to Paul. He states it was an affirmation that yes that is a great idea. I think that is the route we need to go. He states he was throwing away thousands of dollars of expired ALS drugs. We got rid of ALS. Is that a bummer? Yes it is. The flip side is now we have more money to spend towards BLS. One of our ambulances is out of service and really needs to be retired. Here are funds we can now direct towards a better Basic Life Support ambulance. It is funds we can direct towards more EMT's. All of our EMT's are younger individuals and all of them have to work. Our Medical Coordinator is one of them who sometimes work from home and she is making \$25/hour doing her job. If she has to stop working to go out on a call she loses income. If Aaron can compensate her for wearing her radio and then be able to pay her if she goes out on a call that is a plus. When Anita first crunched the numbers and told him the estimated cost he was astounded at how cheap it was to provide 24 hour coverage 7 days per week. He states we need to explore the legal and budgetary aspects. We need to get the EMT's on board. He states he has had incredible response from all of the EMT's so far. They are already signing up for shifts and offering to cover days for him so he can have

some days off. We are heading in the right direction. Aaron asks what can we do for you? If it as simple as standing you down for a patient refusal we can do that. We can do a patient transfer at Twin Rocks Road instead of Evergreen Station. What can we do to accommodate one another? I really appreciated you guys during that blizzard when I called you to tell you I was in a ditch and ask you to come get our patient. You were right there. Then Aaron got to run to the next medical call and he called them and asked them to come from Woodland Park again to get another patient. They got on the radio and asked if they could meet at Evergreen but with the vital sets he was getting Aaron said no just keep coming towards me. It was perfect. That is how it used to be and we can get back to that kind of cooperation. We are using you when we need to and not for every call. There are instances where SPAD has to come all the way down to almost our District border to do a patient refusal on three trauma greens. It is a rollover and there is a mechanism we need to check them out. However, is that something that one of our EMT's can do for you? The more we can do to help you guys then that will allow you more resources to help us. That way when we really do need an ALS bus or a Medic it is not a burden. Aaron states he understands you are all responsible for your own Districts as I am responsible for mine. Aaron states as an agency we need to become more proficient. As an EMT for 10 years with this agency I have had maybe 40 medical calls. That is nowhere near enough to stay proficient on my skills. One of the things we need to look at beyond our CEU's is setting up ride along programs. Setting up programs where we can work with our other agencies to increase our proficiency levels so that when you come out you are finding a patient completely packaged and ready to go exactly as you guys expect and we are meeting the standards of your agency. If your standards are ABC and we are going to be transferred to you then we do ABC. I don't know that as EMT's we have ever been told what is expected other than standard EMT stuff. Aaron's goal is to just provide the best BLS we can do now and this will sustain our program.

Tim Dienst: States he thinks it is amazing what you can do as an EMT with an AED and a combi tube as well as a radio to call for an ALS unit to meet you or to call a helicopter. Tim states he would rather have a really good, competent EMT than a luke warm ALS provider. As an ALS provider you can defibrillate, you can calculate drug doses, you can intubate people but if you don't continually practice those judgment skills that is what gets lost. It is the judgment of the assessment that gets lost. Your thoughts of really building a good BLS are right on track.

Karen Frerichs: Karen asks if ALS and BLS can be explained.

Aaron Mandel. ALS is Advanced Life Support which would be a Paramedic who can read a heart monitor and can give drugs. An EMT Intermediate can also provide ALS support in the State of Colorado. BLS is Basic Life Support which are the EMT's. An EMT Basic can't give all the drugs a Paramedic can and they can't read a heart monitor. An EMT Basic can do a blind intubation with a combi tube. When I took the new CPR last night I was taught if you can't do a tube while they are compressing you don't even mess with it. Aaron states that if we think it is an ALS call then we call for mutual aid and generally it is flight.

Karen Frerichs: States she has gone to Four Mile twice because she had heard that Guffey's ambulance can't go anywhere. She stated Shelly Ridderman EMT I treated her twice with an IV and medication and Shelly was very good. She wants Guffey EMT's to be able to transfer.

Tim Dienst: He states you should consider billing on every call you go on. There are payers out there that will pay. When you are trying to provide inducements for people to run and you are only operating off of your Fire District revenue you will be amazed at how quickly you will be eroding what you have available for structure, wildland, hazmat and all the other stuff a Fire Protection District does. When you do bill at least you are getting some remuneration for that. Medicare and Medicaid don't pay that much but Private Insurance is better. It could be a contentious issue with your residents and your citizens but you are providing a service to them which is highly litigious. Going out and taking refusal is where we open ourselves up to most of our legal liability. When you are paying insurance to help cover those expenses it is important that you bill for your services. You can provide District residents who have an ongoing obligation to you discounts or insurance only billing. When you set that bill you need to make sure that you

know what your costs are and you're billing those costs. If your bill doesn't reflect what your costs are you are actually undermining the efforts of a lot of the rest of us. You are helping to undermine the usual and customary costs. That really hurts us in our reimbursement. If you bill hardly anything and we come down and help you and we provide the ALS service for you and then we send a bill but your bills are undermining "usual and customary" we are getting an even lower reimbursement. If we come down here you can expect anywhere between a \$2200 and a \$2500 ambulance bill. A question from Karen Frerichs is if you have Medicare and AARP do you bill them too? Tim states that when we bill Medicare we will get \$475 out of Medicare and your AARP will pay your portion which might be \$75 to \$80. When we receive \$525 on a call that is costing \$1800 our taxpayers are subsidizing the difference between the \$500 Medicare payment and the \$1800 cost. We are undermining our taxpayers and increasing the need to ask our taxpayers for more taxes or raise the ambulance bills which we won't get. The only thing we can do is ask our taxpayers to increase the taxes. When we think equity and fairness we just can't give our services away. I am glad to hear you are working to try to find some solution. The solution that could keep us from coming. If I have to send an ambulance from Woodland Park to Guffey and then from Guffey to wherever we are going and back you are tying up a Ute Pass resource for four or five hours. That is where it can become an issue for our taxpayers.

Candy Shoemaker: The residents need to understand that it would take Ute Pass a lot longer to transport to Canon City and come back. For Cripple Creek it is just as close to Canon City as it is to Woodland Park which are the two level four trauma centers. The round trip doesn't matter. Paul Mattson stated the most recent call down here we took two people to Canon City because they did not need a higher level hospital and to take them somewhere else strands them but it does take us out of service longer. Candy states UPRAD came into our District and Evergreen Station is in our District to rendezvous and that does save some time. Candy states that Cripple Creek can come on into the scene and then on to Canon City. When you are looking at the cost of providing that particular transport you need to look individually at each call.

Tim Dienst: A question from the floor is are we paying two ambulances from Guffey to Evergreen and from Evergreen to the Hospital. Tim states you have to realize from a Medicare standpoint that it is the entity that actually delivers the patient to the receiving facility that is billable. Generally speaking unless it is an extreme situation you need to understand that if UPRAD comes we are going back that way (toward Woodland Park). We are probably the busiest ambulance district of all of us. Tim's next challenge is to get to three ambulances and to pay for the staff. We are finding ourselves transporting out of Pikes Peak Regional Hospital to the Springs or to Denver and back. If we pick up a patient here and transport to Pikes Peak that is billable. It is also billable to transport from Pikes Peak to another destination. There is a difference between billable and collectible.

Paul Mattson: A request from the floor to explain the trauma levels. Transport to trauma centers is based on capability. To ensure that patients are taken to the most appropriate hospital the State enacted this legislation. This is only a trauma designation. The majority of SPAD transports go to Summit Medical Center.

Level 1 St. Anthony's, Swedish, Denver Health

Level 2 Penrose, Memorial and Parkview

Level 3 St Mary Corwin, Summit Medical, St. Francis Medical Center

Level 4 Pikes Peak Regional, St Thomas More

When it comes to ALS vs. BLS in an area as isolated as we are and if we get a true ALS call like a massive heart attack in South Park and a helicopter is available and you need a hospital so we will use that resource (helicopter). The goal is to get you where you get that definitive care.

Paul stated SPAD in 1991 started using tax base to support service. It was going to cost the average taxpayer about \$20/year. Paul stated they had to have three public hearings and what shocked him was

attendees stated SPAD should be billing. It was imposed on SPAD that we would have to bill as a condition of moving the agency forward. I think you would find the same thing here. In our case we have not raised our mil levy in 22 years. The taxpayer is paying for the availability to have you there if they need you. The family driving to Canon City that has no connection here then pays. This is saying I didn't use it and you didn't take more taxes from me but you used it so we will take your insurance and bill for that. It allows you not to dip into those funds that you need to provide that availability resource. That will give you income to have funds available for staffing. About one-third of our patients in a year are locals. The highways are our biggest drain.

Tim Dienst: Billing requires attending to the legal requirements like establishing provider numbers, Medicare/Medicaid provider numbers and the ability to provide accurate billing.

Paul Mattson: SPAD uses an outside billing agency. The firm we use takes 7% of what they collect. Paul needs to stay on top of the billing agency. Medicare changes the rules and requirements and Medicare will go to the billing agency and train them. It is so much better to get experts out there.

Candy Shoemaker: Obtained a tax increase in our area just to provide ambulance service. We offer a 50% discount. We bill the insurance and if your deductible is \$200 the patient is only responsible for \$100. Most of our billing goes to local in district residents.

Paul Mattson: Because we haven't raised our mil levy in so long we don't offer discounts. What we are able to do as a BOD when we get requests for reductions and write offs we have policies in place and for residents the Board is very generous. We may require proof of annual income. We also rely on feedback from the crews. We have a form that we send out on what they will need to provide us. At a Board meeting Paul will review and make recommendation according to policy.

Aaron Mandel: Dr. Ross is retiring. Need new Medical Director. Aaron is more favorable of going toward Woodland Park as there is a better chance of an ALS intercept. AMR has been reticent to meet and transport. If we need to transport how will we do it?

Candy Shoemaker: A lot of it will be determined by your Physician advisor. What your EMT's do on scene could affect his license. You need to have some good heart to hearts with your Physician advisor. He needs to understand where you are at and he may put limits on you for awhile. I don't know just because your Physician advisor was out of Canon that it would preclude you from rendezvousing with us. Right now your protocols are the same as ours. They are the 2013 Teller EMS protocols. You need to find somebody who will not shuffle you under the rug because you are not an ALS agency. Whoever you go for you need to ask some hard questions of them about requirements you have in your system.

Paul Mattson: All Physician advisors have liaison people that work under them to come in and meet with you. One of the things in all these years our Physician advisor has never asked why did you take them to that hospital instead of bringing them to me. That is not ethical or legal. You need to find a Physician Advisor who understands small rural agencies. If you can find a Physician advisor who is affiliated with whatever facility would be seeing a larger number of the patients you would be transporting to can provide you with routine feedback which is good. As to your question as to whether or not you should be transporting. I believe with limited call volumes if you are not transporting you are losing a lot of the experience that could be gained with those transports. It is different on scene than watching how oxygen or fluid changes a patient over time. You can't increase the number of patients but you can increase the time with them. Paul has asked his Physician advisor for a physician contact. It is possible to get lost if you go too big a facility. A really good medical director is invaluable.

Aaron Mandel: With the system we are looking to put in place and we only have one ambulance and one EMT on call. We have AMR's and fire fighters and we can do a transport. What do we do when we get a second call? Can we call Dispatch and tell them we have to go on a transport could you notify Teller County just let them know we will be out of District.

Paul Mattson: Earlier last year that was the policy. What changed last year in my opinion was there was a total disregard for EMS. I was convinced there was a belief by a person that it was fixed by expecting all of us to fix it.

There was a time about 20 years ago when Four Mile covered this area. We had an agreement with them if it sounded like an ALS call we would be actually toned out and would start a unit towards Hartsel and until people got on scene and determined we weren't needed. Mutual aid is when everyone in EMS is there to help people. Any agency can get overwhelmed. Tim was saying he really needs a third ambulance. Sometimes that third ambulance happens to be Candy's group. Not that long ago on Wilkerson Pass there was a very serious accident and Ute Pass Ambulance got there before we could get there. The patient's don't care what the label is on the side of the ambulance. The conversation we had with Amy, Anita and Mike at our Board meeting in December came down to there was a period of time that you (SPCFPD) weren't even taking an ambulance to the scene. That is what concerned me. If you are not taking an ambulance on the scene you have no intention of functioning as an EMS System. An EMT without an ambulance is like just another bystander in a lot of ways. An ambulance is what we work in. That is our office and we need that. If you run out of ambulances you would notify Teller and notify Fairplay and you would say advise those that we are out of ambulances. If we start hearing things in case Dispatch Center makes a mistake we know we are available for you.

AMR is private so they look at the world a little differently. We have a contract with AMR for Denver and Colorado Springs. We will transfer the patient to them and the patient only gets one bill. We handle the billing and we guarantee to pay them \$2.32 per minute. If we bill then we collect. Tim if you could find out who is handling business affairs for AMR and it may be something to discuss. There may be a few times a year we might need you. Generally these things fall through the cracks because nobody has had the conversation.

Amy Mason: Asked Paul for clarification if we were billing would it improve our chances in working with AMR. **Paul** answers they don't really care as long as they can bill. We set it up that way with AMR because we didn't want our residents to get hit with two bills. He clarified; the agency that drops the patient off at the hospital is the one that gets to bill. **Amy** stated what we talked about when we met with you on December 10th was essentially that there was nothing mutual about our mutual aid. Your taxpayers were not getting anything reimbursed from us when you were coming on calls and didn't bill. With our prospective new operating agreement which our attorney is currently working on it will be figured out. When you do come down to do patient transfers you are billing. **Paul** states regarding the car wreck a few weeks ago those people were billed through our process. It has always been that way, Paul says, when it is truly mutual aid which is what Aaron was talking about is that we help each other. We want to help. Our systems need you to be strong beyond what your community needs. You can rely on us to help but you can't rely on us to do your service for free all of the time. Paul sent the letter that we were canceling our mutual aid to get your attention. Paul states he works for his Board saying "I have a responsibility to make sure that my board knows what's going on at all times."

Amy Mason questions and clarifies to Paul, Tim and Candy that none of us knew that. She felt they may have had a poor outlook toward us assuming that we knew...*(they were doing all of our calls all of the time for free, to be certain our board was unaware that our previous Chief was not communicating with them and expecting them to do all of our EMS calls for free.)** When we were made aware of the situation this was very uncomfortable for the Board. We were not aware our mutual aid was not mutual. It was a very uncomfortable situation when we realized what was happening.

Paul Mattson reports that he came to that conclusion independently and that is why the SPAD board came together to send the letter in December to get your attention canceling our mutual aid agreement. We were concerned, I was extremely concerned there was NO communication from your previous Chief to the board. The most important thing for a Chief to remember is that this is not my ambulance, but that I work for the board. As a chief there is a responsibility statutorily to be sure there is communication to the board

at all times. As a manager of a system my mission has to be that we are meeting the public's expectation and we are not doing anything that could come back and damage the system, leading to lawsuits or waste tax dollars. Once we were convinced the SPCFPD board was not aware of the problem is the moment they decided they needed to take action.

Amy Mason reaffirmed that this board is committed and works for the community. The safety of the public, the families and visitors that drive through is our primary concern. It is an incredible experience we have all gone through since December.

Paul Mattson comments that in my 25 years in my position I have never had to talk to another District's Board of Directors. I am not sure your community realizes how amazingly unusual this system was. Your former Chief was shocked to learn that we have had SPCFPD ambulances into our district; that we relied on you guys at times. The concept that there was going to be no ambulance down here and as isolated as you are, there's nothing between Fairplay and Guffey except Hartsel.

Candy Shoemaker: SWT EMS is kind of in that position and the buffer in between us was Four Mile. Now Four Mile no longer has an ambulance and has gone to a rescue situation because they just couldn't staff it anymore. Their district is within our district, SWT runs to the Park County line. It does limit the amount of resources that are available to both of us if we have something big happening down here. Just to transport out of Cripple Creek is a little tricky sometimes. Sometimes this is the only way we can come. We couldn't go to Colorado Springs last year with the floods so we went to Canon. We didn't go through Guffey but we can. It was a concern for us too because the more of these smaller agencies that disappear the tougher it is for all of us to function.

Tim Dienst: He states what we need to consider in the long run is that it is going to become harder for small rural agencies to function on their own because of economics and less health care dollars. I think what you are going to see in the long run is consolidation. I think that one of the things you might want to start with is considering some kind of consolidation between you and Four Mile. To have your infrastructure and their infrastructure and all that money and health care dollars when health care dollars are disappearing is a consideration. We are going to be paying for some of the savings that the Affordable Care Act is going to bring about by cutting payments to providers. Even on the eastern plains there are going to be consolidations. The financial crunch is getting worse for everyone. I think you need to do your best to make what you are trying to do now work.

Amy Mason: Is there a possibility with a different Physician advisor if our EMT's and Paramedics were able to go on ride-alongs to continue their acuity would that be something that might be possible for our district to eventually go back to an ALS system?

Candy Shoemaker: Folks in your district have always been welcome to ride with Cripple Creek. All we require is proof of insurance. It really depends. It is difficult even with ride-alongs unless they are regular to get that exposure. You can teach them how to spinal immobilize people. You can have practices and do that. One of the first response agencies is the Mine Rescue Team. They are awesome EMT's but they practice all the time. They do a lot of scenarios and they just do a lot of stuff. The harder part is the assessments. I am having a heart attack but it is hard to look at me pink, warm and dry and get that picture if they don't see some of those. It depends on how committed they are to making those third rides. As infants in a big system that has a lot of calls they may be fine. Dr. Ross has always treated that on a per provider basis. The rules are you can't be an ALS provider unless you have had three years experience. If you are part time you have to be working full time somewhere else. Teller County is putting out an RFP to look at other systems because University was interested. Penrose is reorganizing and they are very interested in keeping us. It behooves us to make sure that those folks are ready to provide the type of service we want. There is an issue with a person hanging upside down. We need to get them out but how do we do that because if they hang here for very long that is really bad. Tim states if they had a really strong BLS system that was working down here that is a BLS call. That patient would have been out of the car and half way to the hospital by the time we got there.

Paul Mattson: The bulk of calls that are classified as ALS are generally for pain medication. The other dramatic things that Paramedics can do don't happen very often. When we formed our district we were BLS for three years. The intermediate program is another good way to get some ALS. When we went first went to all paid employees everyone was an Intermediate. Because we knew we had limited exposure to ALS calls it was better to have two on an ambulance than one.

You need to find a doctor that meets your needs, not the other way around. Our Medical Director is out of Denver but he has a doctor that works with him who is the Chief of the Emergency Department at the Summit Medical Center. There is a possibility if you go with a doctor in the Springs they might be able offer other medical resources at St. Thomas More or Pikes Peak. There might be one overall Medical Director but you need to ask what can you offer a BLS system? If you have solid BLS response then your people are going to be really on top of a call that becomes ALS because they are going to know how to get the help quickly, determine what is the best way to get that help and how to maintain that patient until you can get that interception.

It is a nice goal to look at ALS but consolidation to a bigger system could change some things. Consolidation is going to be the wave of the future. I cover three fire protection districts and 85-90% of the calls are medical. Why does it take three fire districts to cover an area that one ambulance can cover? That means those people are paying for infrastructure for three fire departments so ultimately they are paying a lot more annually in taxes to fire departments in a gross sense then they are paying the ambulance. If the money was reversed I would have more stations and more people out there. We have seven fire protection districts to cover in Park County and only one sheriff's department.

Aaron Mandel: States he has seen in Michigan where they are going to a county wide EMS system with one fire department and one EMS department for the entire county and they are saving a lot of money by doing that.

Paul Mattson: In 1991 when we were starting the formation of our district that was our original proposal and I met with people in Guffey, in Lake George and in Bailey and no one was interested. When Tim said he was forming his district as it turns out Lake George doesn't have enough taxable property to be able to provide the level of service Tim is providing without that Teller County side. You guys should take pride in the fact that you have made it this long. Platte Canyon Rescue existed for 30 some years and basically went out of business over night. They called Dispatch and said we are closed. High Country EMS in Lake George collapsed and disappeared. Platte Canyon Fire EMS Division is now in big financial trouble. They did not ask for enough money from the public to actually provide the service. They had the budget we had worked with all these years.

Amy Mason: stated we are still here because of the dedicated volunteers that keep us fiscally responsible and that show up. All the people on our roster that provide service, don't get paid and show up. Amy states this past week with all the public upheaval and the emotion we had a line of people at our meeting the other night that were here to thank Aaron personally because sometime during the past however many years he had saved their life at one point or another. They were the people that weren't standing up and being loud and shouting. Regardless of the emotional upheaval that we have gone through we are so dedicated and so proud to be part of this department and we can see where it is going and it is in a positive direction for our people. We just thank you guys for helping us and stepping up and letting us know because we didn't know.

Paul Mattson wants to give this Board credit for discussing this with the public. The average person in Park and Teller Counties don't know the details you have heard today.

Karen Frerichs states this was a wakeup call for her.

Paul Mattson stated where he was impressed with Aaron is you need a leader/manager of your system that is not just looking at today. He is looking where are we going in five years, ten years, where are we going to be someday? Look at the proud history this department has and how do we maintain that? Sometimes

that means you have got to go through exactly what you are going through unfortunately because people who never gave a thought about fire and EMS now have to pay attention.

Mary Curtis: Our mutual aid was discontinued. From the discussion today I get an understanding what impact kind of impact that had on our community. I am assuming that is no longer the case. **Amy Mason** asked what kind of impact did you think this had. **Mary Curtis** stated she thought through the mutual aid we weren't working together.

Amy Mason stated this happened last year and at the meeting in August we learned that Mike had gone to the agencies and told dispatch through volunteers that we were no longer sending ambulances on calls Monday through Thursday for a period of time. Amy states the Board had no knowledge that Mike had done this until the agencies came for a mutual aid discussion in August. The Board went from there to work with Mike and have him talk to these three people and make the communication he needed to as our Chief so we could continue.

That did not happen and in December Paul sent the Board a letter telling us that they were discontinuing our mutual aid because we did not have any communication or appreciation of anything that had happened since the meeting in August, 2013. We went to the meeting with SPAD in December and our mutual aid as it was ended on December 31st. We have been in touch with them since the meeting in December and we realized what the problem is and we have been die hard and steadfast on making a plan that is going to work between our agencies and ourselves so we can have the coverage that this community needs for our EMS services and our fire.

Our legal advisors on all sides are working up a new Inter Agency Agreement on how we are going to work with each other. They are doing the advanced life support and we can do the basic life support. What we are working on here today is to work with our agencies that are near us to provide them with the financial support that they need and to provide them the hands on support that they need so we can take care of people. So we can make ourselves the best stellar BLS agency that we can. Amy states we have been working on this for months. That way we can work with them with exactly what they need. What can we hand over to you to get our patients taken care of? That was part of the miscommunication at the end of the year when we were stopping the ALS. What we are doing is setting up our ambulance to do BLS. It costs us a lot less money. We have these guys on hand and the helicopter that is ready to land when we need it. We are training our guys and volunteers that are on our list how to recognize, what to call for, when to call for, when to stabilize, what these people want us to hand over to them and how they want it handed so we can take care of the people in our district.

Tim says rendezvousing means a lot to us.

Amy Mason asks Mary Curtis if there is something we didn't answer or need to clarify?

Mary Curtis: I find it hard to believe because of one person that we would lose our mutual aid. To me that is something that is very serious and critical. I would think that this had to have been something that was ongoing not just one little incident and that one person could actually have you come and say we are dissolving our mutual aid.

Paul Mattson: Last July the Director of the Communication Center received a fax from the Guffey Fire Department saying on these days of the week we are not providing services and you are to just contact other agencies. She is the Secretary-Treasurer on my Board of Directors. She called and asked what is going on? Paul said he had no idea. We just had an ES Council Meeting where it had never been brought up. Paul's understanding is she let Chief Simpson know that before they could implement this there were some things that were going to need to be done like who do we call. What is the procedure for your Department to identify who to call? Paul had asked Dispatch to have the Chief give him a call since I know nothing about this and I would like to talk to him about these issues. The Chief did not call Paul, he had Kent Wierman give him a call and he was explaining what the situation was. Paul said he did not know things had deteriorated this much. For a very temporary period of time we will do whatever we can to help

you. Paul asked Kent to have the Chief call me so we can really work out the nuts and bolts of this. Paul said he got Mike's number at the December meeting when the SPCFPD Board showed up. We were getting called down on calls where there is a gentleman in the area well known to the local responders who wanted to know where he could get alcohol counseling. The day we were paged out we weren't given information more than it was a possible diabetic emergency, it wasn't. Your Chief at that time was on the radio about every 15 minutes wanting to know where we were at. We know it is about an hour down here. Subsequently, he was advised on the scene that he should cancel us because we aren't needed. Our crew comes all the way down and it was Paul's Asst. Chief and we find out what are we here for. That ambulance was out of service for about two hours for our drive down and back and the time on the scene. When I asked the Chief about that at our December meeting he blamed the responders for that and that he was not responsible for that. At first denied being on the scene, quite honestly. There were these issues and issues that were brought up at the ES Council Meeting at different times with interactions with a couple of fire departments.

There was a large meeting between Mike and the Chiefs from Lake George and Hartsel and other people related to the fire side. What happened was we came down on a number of calls where we were truly not needed where an EMT could release the patient without tying us up. I did not know until our December meeting as I was under the impression that Mike was an EMT. I asked why he wasn't canceling us by doing his job. He commented that he was in the process of changing his license here. That is like a two-week process. I was flabbergasted because one of the frustrations is you have an EMT on the scene and he is not functioning that way.

We were looking at the mutual aid agreement as very symbolic of how you interact because there are a lot of loopholes in it. You call for mutual aid and we call for mutual aid. It is very clear in these agreements if you can't come you say you can't come and that is it. There is no real obligation just sets out that if we come down to assist you guys we follow our policies and procedures and our protocols. You might be able to tell us if it is a large incident and he's command I need you to go to Canon City with this patient or I need you to go here. If that is appropriate we follow that. He can tell us where to park but he can't tell us what to do. It is more just to avoid issues on the scene. There were rumors about getting rid of ambulances and there had been some comments that got back to Paul that there was a possibility that it was resolved down here by counting on the larger systems to provide the service. We knew the mutual aid agreement is more symbolic than legal and it was one way to get the attention of the Board because we were under the impression that the Board didn't know what was going on but we didn't know for sure.

The three of us along with Jeff Force from Dr. Ross's office did come in August to meet with everyone to say this is temporary and we can't do this forever. We came down to educate everybody on we are helping you out but what is your long term and what can we do?

Tim Dienst advised that he did not know the board was unaware of the situation in August. He was shocked

Paul Mattson: There were never any conversations whatsoever. No contact since August. I would see Mike at the ES Council Meetings and we would sit at opposite ends. We had no real communication. Paul stated we'll see how this goes. Maybe they are working on it. Maybe non-communication is how he operates. Once we saw that it was coming upon a new year where is this progress? We sent that letter with the idea that we invited anyone from the Board and Mike to attend the meeting. We had a very frank discussion. I was shocked that he wasn't an EMT. Quite honestly I was shocked that he didn't seem to accept any responsibility down here it was always the volunteers, which Paul found troublesome. We had a very positive conversation Board to Board. Quite honestly Amy and Anita with admitting that we are working on this involving Mike and that we are all going to work together. We left that meeting with the following understanding. We are convinced that you guys are serious about fixing this and whether it is in writing or not you have got us. We are there.

That night I had made the comment that I found it totally bizarre that we were here in the beginning of August and here it is December that we haven't heard from anybody on our offer to come down here and help you at no cost. Do whatever it takes. They apologized not realizing that there had been no communications and right then and there said let's pick a date when are we going to meet. And we said this (*today, January 16th*)* was the date. We felt that this was a very positive meeting. Paul's Boards was very impressed with the (*SPCFPD's*)* commitment to the community that we are going to work on this. We took it positively that Mike was going to work with you and try to move things forward. Whatever came up after that was whatever. This is the first time in Paul's 25 years that we have ever had an agency that we dealt with on a routine basis just overnight virtually, just disappear. While agencies that went belly up that were having the problems they were having in Bailey and Lake George they were not imposing on any of us. Coming down to assist is one thing but coming down to run every call is what the problem was.

The night of the December meeting Paul asked Mike what are you going to do if we are not available? We've had calls where we are having a heck of a time because all of our mutual aid is about an hour away. If we don't have an ambulance available because we are running calls what are you going to do? Mike stated he'd call a helicopter. But what if a helicopter is not available and you are not taking an ambulance to the scene how are you going get them anywhere and how are you going to provide the treatment? All of our agencies have had calls where we have interacted where he (*Mike Simpson*)* was on scene and there are questions of what was going on from a medical standpoint and whether or not it had a negative impact on the patient. And those were not related and the Board is not aware of those to my knowledge.

Mary Curtis asks if we are currently working together?

Paul states because of Amy and Anita and Aaron who was able to come by in Fairplay and he was able to reiterate that he wanted to touch base with me.

Tim Dienst stated they have a mutual aid agreement and we still have it and we were getting ready to do the same thing (*end the mutual aid agreement.*)*

Mary Curtis asked if this was recent?

Paul Mattson stated from the perspective of South Park Ambulance it all started in July. Paul stated that to retain an agreement was made before the most recent decisions had to be made. We were very impressed when they (*SPCFPD Board of Director's*)* made it clear they were going to work with this. He also states that when he met with Aaron boom right away all the stuff we talked about for three or four hours.

Mary Curtis: If there was a 911 call right now what would be the procedure and what would transpire? If this was truly a life threatening situation.

Aaron Mandel responds we would be toned out. I would have an ambulance coming out of Station 2 and I would be responding with the Chief's truck with BLS equipment in it. If it looked like it was an ALS call I'd be calling for Flight. If Flight wasn't available I'd be calling for mutual aid ALS. At the point when I got on scene and determined that the patient was a transport I'd be calling Teller County and see if we can do some kind of a patient rendezvous. We need to discuss how we can better facilitate that to not inconvenience both of us. At this point I still can't drive all the way in. Today I am the only EMT in the district right now.

Paul Mattson stated all of us are aware of that. We see that as a short term goal of being able to transport.

Tim Dienst states it is so nice to know that you have something out here if you need us and that if you will need us you are going to meet us and we are not coming all the way down here to go all the way over there to come all the way back.

Aaron Mandel: In EMS we are taught the Golden Hour. How is that helping the Golden Hour when we could be proactive in coming towards you with a patient?

Paul Mattson responds that we are back to where we were traditionally.

Candy Shoemaker: I think we are the new kids on the block because there was an agency in between us and that is why we never had a mutual aid with Guffey because Four Mile was in between. Now we did have a mutual agreement with Four Mile so that if Four Mile was over in Guffey or what not then we would cover Four Mile. Four Mile was an unusual situation because they were within our district. We certainly don't have a problem coming in but it will take us awhile to get here, about 35 minutes.

Paul Mattson: With the system that Aaron just described to you we will avoid what happened when there was a crash on Highway 9 about two weeks ago (*Dec. 28*)* where your ambulance was paged out and already on a medical call. It is not often when we get overlapping down here but when we do it is tough for everybody. In the process of that since it was on Highway 9 they asked for mutual aid from us so our crew was getting ready to leave the station when the Chief (*Simpson*)* came on and canceled us and said he would go to the scene. Basically by the time our crew was then called later and transported the patients it was about a three hour time period from when we were originally called and then canceled and got the patients to Canon City. Don't know why there was that delay. While the people had the potential of very minor injuries there was one patient in the car that had the potential of more serious injuries. For where the location is and weather conditions it was about a 45 minute drive to the scene. I was out of town and the shift captain got a hold of me and said he had never seen anything like this, it is unbelievable. We still responded because of the verbal agreement we made in the summer. The difference now is where it is obvious that those people needed a transport that there wouldn't have been a cancellation. What was tough was that day was busy enough for us that the delay to get to Canon City and back was impacting us at the other end where if we could have started out a couple of hours earlier we would have been better off.

Aaron stated while your ambulance was doing the transport my ambulance became available again. In the future maybe we could help cover you guys while you are doing that?

Paul Mattson: That would be something I would have no hesitation doing that once we are convinced the system is back up to where it once was. Again we have the obligation to the people within our district of a certain level of care. We had an agreement like that years ago with High Country. We covered the Eleven Mile/Spinney Recreation Area. We get a number of calls out there. High Country was wanting money and approached us and said can we figure something out. You can have every call and every transport out there but there is one provision is we got toned out and they got toned out. So there was not a mistake of us not getting paged to go to that call. If your BLS crew got on scene and you determined it was a BLS call we would cancel on your word and you would handle the entire call. The failure at that time, the reason why it didn't work was we were still getting to Eleven Mile before they did. We had a lawyer look into that and we had our Office of Medical Director look into that because the concern was can we trust that they would make the right decisions and the State of Colorado said if you are an EMT you are supposed to know when you need ALS. They had some good EMTs at that time and there are ways for all of us make this work. We just need to see you guys move forward with all of this. We could do some joint training and quite honestly we can provide some of that.

Jim Smith: Jim asked questions about communication and social media. Why haven't you gotten together and formed something where you keep track of your ambulances? Why haven't you done that?

Tim Dienst: Responded, they do that and keep track of their ambulances.

Jim Smith: You don't know whether our Chief was talking to the Board. Did you ask Mike if he was talking to the Board?

Paul Mattson: I have never heard of a Chief that kept things from the Board. If that is what was occurring that's what was occurring. Paul did not ask Mike if he was talking to the board. Paul stated the problem was, we all know it is difficult being the new guy in the area. What all of us would make clear at the meetings of the ES Council is we are here to help what can we do? You can't force help onto somebody. If our letter in December had of been blown off we wouldn't be sitting here today. They are not interested and it is not our problem. We fixed our problem for our taxpayers. We rely on the dispatchers to know who is

available. There is technology out there in metro areas to track ambulances but it is very expensive. We have ES Council that meets monthly that involves command personnel Chiefs of all the fire departments, 2 police departments, 1 sheriff department, park rangers from Eleven Mile, State Patrol, the County mapping people, the County's Communication Center, Emergency Manager, and Search and Rescue. At our meeting on January 28th will also have the Captain of the State Patrol from Canon City, and the Director of CDOT from this region because we have got some highway issues. That is where a lot of those things get taken care of. The meeting is open to the public. **Jim Smith** asked if this meeting is on the internet. Paul said no, that is a good point and he would look into it.

Karen Frerichs states why we didn't know what was going on because we didn't come to the meetings. If I want to know anything I will be at the meetings. I learned a lot today about the Chief which I did not know before because I was not at the meetings. Karen thanked Paul, Candy and Tim for coming down to help our people just like they help their people. She also thanked Shelly Ridderman for helping her and Jim Ivey for driving her.

Jim Smith: Stated there was a communication problem period, between the community and the board, between the Chief's and each other. Paul and Tim disagreed.

PaulMattsoon: One agency (*SPCFPD*)* that was not communicating with the other agencies. It is incumbent on us (*managers/chiefs*)* that our boards are aware of everything that is going on. If not, it is a failure of the manager, not the board. If there is a lack of communication within the system, then in my system, I'm the guy you blame, (*not my board*)*.

Tim Dienst: I'm not going to come down here butting into your business – but it becomes part of my business if you keep pulling my resources. I am going to talk to the Chief and not the board.

Amy Mason: clarified, Mike Simpson was not communicating with them. It is written in our minutes starting in August. We have it in writing. We doubled our meetings each month, bringing the volunteers in for an extra meeting. We were meeting twice each month, each month to improve communication. If anyone in this community says they don't know about this then THEY have been out of the loop. We have had extra meetings. The information has been on our website for over six months. She said she would be glad to sit down with you after the meeting and show you.

Jim Smith says the minutes are not working. It doesn't fix it.

Roberta Smith (*our board secretary*)* disagrees and states that is not true.

Flip Boettcher says people have to be more involved if they want to know what is going on they have to put out some effort it just doesn't land in your lap.

Paul Mattson noted most people left when we started this portion of the meeting.

11) **Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 12:38PM by Chairwoman Amy Mason.

Respectfully Submitted by Roberta Smith, Secretary to the Board

(NOTE: These minutes are abnormally extensive and comprehensive to meet the requests of our community at this time. Every attempt has been made to report all statements as accurately as possible without actually creating a transcript. The SPCFPD Board of Directors welcomes comments from the public; however, anyone reading these minutes should remember that each statement is the personal opinion of the individual speaker.)

* *The italicized statements have been included for clarification by members of the Board.*